

**VILLAGE OF CRIDERSVILLE COUNCIL MINUTES**  
**Regular Meeting – July 11, 2022**  
**7:30p.m.**

Call to Order  
Pledge of Allegiance  
Roll Call

Present: Mayor Rick Walls, Council Members: Joe Bailey, Dorance Thompson, Dylan Lauck and Steve Numbers. Also present: Solicitor Angela Elliott, Fiscal Officer Susan Bassitt and Village Administrator Jarid Kohlriseser. Eric West arrive a little late.

Motion was made by Numbers and seconded by Lauck to excuse Stacey Cook who was on vacation. Motion passed 4-0.

It was moved by Bailey and seconded by Thompson to accept the minutes of the June 13, 2022 Council Meeting. Motion passed 4-0.

Eric West arrived at the meeting.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**Committee of the Whole:** No Report

**Utilities & Surface Water:** Joe Bailey reported there were some pumping issues with one of our four wells at the water treatment plant last month. That well has been taken offline to diagnose the issue. Bierly Well Drilling Company has been called to make that determination. Village crews dug and replaced the water shut off at 697 Woodridge. They also repaired a storm sewer line at 319 W. High St. Construction continues on E. Main St., the crews have made it to the intersection of E. Main and Elizabeth St. Within a week or so construction will reach Hickory St. which will close the in-town detour route. No public access will be able to get through. Emergency services will be permitted. The updated closing of Hickory St. will be posted on the Village Face Book page. All traffic will have to detour around via Buckland Holden Rd. at that point. Jarid has talked to the businesses in that area. The project will continue to Dixie Hwy and extend south to the car lot.

**Planning:** Dylan Lauck reported the zoning violation from May for widening a driveway using stone will be brought into compliance this month as contractor scheduling permits. There were two additional violations in June, one has been brought into compliance and the other is in the process. There was no mention of the nature of the violations.

**Finance:** No Report

**Park:** Mayor Walls stated the Village crews installed and secured the ram statue on its base at Legacy Park and landscaped around it with river rock to complete the project. Re-stoning of the Delong-Pioneer Park has been mostly completed. There is still some more stone to be placed on the paths to complete that project.

The school has asked if the back lot of Delong-pioneer Park might be used as a student pick-up and drop-off spot during the school year to alleviate other traffic congestion at the school. The idea is in preliminary stages. Council had no objections to the idea.

**Streets:** Dorance Thompson reported the Village Administrator received an the estimate for the repairs needed to W. Sugar Street damaged by a farmer last month. The estimate was just under \$40,000.00. The estimate and police report have been turned over to the Village's insurance company. They will proceed with the claim.

**Properties:** Steve Numbers reported the Village crew assembled and finished fabricating the new police speed trailer and that is now in service.

**Safety:**

Fire Chief Miller was not in attendance but he asked Jarid Kohlrieser to state there were 65 EMS and 13 Fire calls in June. There were a total of 415 calls as of July 1<sup>st</sup>.

Police Chief Robbins reported there were 113 calls for service in June, 2022. There were 178 calls in June of 2021.

Part time Patrolman Hennon resigned June 30, 2022 citing family reasons. This leaves the department with only 3 full time officers and 1 part time officer. A new officer has been hired to fill a full time position, Allen Madlock, but he has not taken his state test yet so he can't work full time until he has his certification which should be in the next week or two.

A revised quote came in for a new 2022 Ford Interceptor at \$47,047.00 with an estimated 12 week delivery time.

**Motion was made to go ahead and order the new cruiser by Thompson and seconded by Bailey. Motion passed 5-0.** The oldest cruiser could be used for the proposed SRO vehicle.

Chief Robbins said the department's new speed trailer is in use. He thanked the street department for their work on modifying the trailer. They are waiting on a sign to finish it up. The sign from IC Signs in Wapakoneta will have the Village seal and police department lettering matching the patrol vehicles.

Chief Robbins said Wapakoneta City schools are looking to add School Resource Officers (SRO's) to each one of their buildings. Susan has provided council a breakdown of the estimated cost of funding the officer in Cridersville. Superintendent Aaron Rex is present to address questions.

Mayor Walls brought up again the topic of increasing the Village's full time officer's pay. He said Council has received all the paperwork they could possibly need on the subject. Eric West stated they have been working extensively for several months with the planning and finance committees and various committees through town trying to figure out a good way to circumvent the most recent lack of police officers. It has become a very unpopular profession in the last several years. The area counties and cities are having trouble as well. We are trying to entice someone to not only to invest their time and opportunity into the village but to perhaps stick around and call the village home. The biggest factor holding us back is the wage. After all the discussions, the current proposal is to ask that the new wage be brought up to \$20.00 for starting police officers.

Joe Bailey said he spoke with a commander from Rhodes State and all his current students are already spoken for. Bailey added that with other departments offering to pay for schooling and starting wages of \$27.00, it is going to make it very difficult for the Village to entice and keep officers, but something needs done.

Dorance Thompson said he feels it is overdue and needs to get passed and on the books so when we go fight for candidates we do not fall behind in the wage scale.

Dylan Lauck said he put together a spread sheet because he was having trouble deciphering not what our officers deserve, that nobody wants to do this for \$20.00 an hour, let's be clear about that, but whether it is sustainable to continue to increase wages. He also asked if \$20.00 is going to be enough to solve anything, we still will not be competitive with those around us. He suggested a \$5,000.00 sign-on bonus with a 2-3 year commitment. The sign-on bonus would basically reimburse the officer's academy costs and could be quite appealing to new grads. His spreadsheet forecasts how the wages will affect the budget now and in the future. Dylan said the only thing that makes it sustainable is if the SRO counts as one of the five full time officers and everyone must agree the SRO would need to be available to work on holidays, weekends and during the summers for the Village. Having five full time officers in addition to the SRO is probably not sustainable.

Steven Numbers said that they had previously discussed a wage of \$18.00 for trainees not yet certified. Chief Robbins said that can remain until they are certified. He would prefer to wait until they pass the state test before hiring so there is nothing wasted in the event they don't pass.

Mayor Walls asked for a motion to change the pay ordinance to move full time officers to \$20.00 per hour and declaring an emergency. Motion was made by West and seconded by Thompson. Motion passed 5-0.

## **OLD BUSINESS:**

**Mayor Walls introduced Ordinance #1702, enacting Chapter 178 providing for an excise tax on lodging by a hotel or transient accommodation.** The Ordinance would levy a three percent (3%) tax on accommodations in Cridersville. The ordinance states the money collected would be put in the General Fund. The ordinance would go into effect on January 01, 2023. A motion to pass Ordinance #1702 for the third and final readings was made by Bailey and seconded by Thompson. Motion passed 5-0.

## **NEW BUSINESS:**

Wapakoneta City School Superintendent, Aaron Rex and school board members Ron Mertz and Gregg Ruppert were also present. Mr. Rex presented information about the desire of the school board to place school resource officers (SRO) in each of the four Wapak City School buildings. They have had a contract with the Wapak Police Department for many years, but they only have one officer for all four buildings. He explained the current safety measures the schools currently have in place such as restricted entry and panic buttons under secretary desks, lock down procedures and ALICE training, and updated camera systems plus a number of other measures. The school board and this district make safety a top priority.

A school resource officer would be hired by the Village of Cridersville and be an employee of the Cridersville Police Department. Mr. Rex presented an estimated cost for an officer working 180 days in the Cridersville Elementary at \$25.00 per hour to be \$62,280.00 based on school district benefits. The Village estimated the cost for an actual full time officer that would work at the school when it is in session and in the Village when school is not in session such as holidays and during the summer. That estimated cost is about \$82,488.00. The school board would pay a percentage and the Village would pay the remainder.

The value of the SRO was discussed beyond the obvious safety factor. They also handle issues with confrontational incidents from parents, help teacher's, they spend time with the children. The officers pose a positive force in the school and children tend to form close bonds with them.

The Mayor and the council members were in complete agreement to pursue the school boards proposal for the SRO.

Mr. Rex will get an official proposal/contract with the amounts both parties will be responsible for and all the details from the school board as soon as possible to the Mayor. Then there will be a special meeting to address the issue as soon as possible.

Joe Bailey said we need to have a special meeting to discuss another police issue as well even though they set a \$20.00 starting wage.

Mayor Walls said a date will be set for a Special Council Meeting to discuss both issues when the proposal /contract is received from the school board.

Mayor Walls stated that Crossroads will be holding public information meetings to provide the community with information and updates on the project on the other side of I-75. The meetings will be held at the Cridersville Elementary School on July 14<sup>th</sup> at 7p.m. and on July 23<sup>rd</sup> at 11a.m.

Dan Neal who is currently operating the Bear' Den was present. He said he had some negative interaction with the Fire Department during the jamboree concerning the car show that he sponsored. He wanted to clarify that he has no intentions of causing any problems for the Village. Mr. Neal made a \$700.00 donation to the police department and a \$300.00 donation to the Library.

Melissa Luthman from the Cridersville Library said the Water Fight that had to be postponed earlier this summer has been rescheduled for August 13<sup>th</sup> at 6;30p.m at Cridersville Elementary School. All are invited.

Dorance Thompson presented pictures of signs that could be purchased to be posted at the old school parking lot regarding parking and towing. Council will look at the examples and discuss next month.

Motion to adjourn was made by Bailey and seconded by Lauck. Motion passed 5-0.

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Susan Bassitt, Village Fiscal Officer

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Rick Walls, Mayor

